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CONCERNING CONSCIENCE: STUDIES IN PRACTICAL ETHICS. By H. Jeffs. London: James Clarke & Co., 1912. Pp. viii, 284.

Under a somewhat repellent title Mr. Jeffs has given us a thoroughly good book. It may be described as a discussion of the attitude which a Christian should take up with regard to the moral problems which occur in social, professional, and business life. The ethical standpoint is uncompromisingly Christian, though matters of doctrine are carefully avoided,—in fact, the book is remarkable for its tolerant attitude to differences of opinion on non-moral questions. Though his sympathies are evidently Protestant, the author fully recognizes the defects of Protestantism, and speaks very plainly about the negative character of the ‘Nonconformist conscience,’ and the failure of Protestantism to supply a “systematic and continuous practical training of the Christian conscience.” The chief value of the book lies in its insistence on the social nature of conscience, and on the duty of Christians to bring the spirit of Christ into every department of life. The author illustrates by forcible instances how hard it is to be at the same time a good Christian and a ‘good business man,’ and yet how absolutely essential it is, if Christianity is not to be a mockery, that business should be ruled by Christian principles. The same applies to the various professions, such as medicine, law, and journalism. With regard to journalism, the author might have spoken much more strongly than he has done. Not only is the party journalist practically bound, on pain of losing his job, to support his party in all things, but he may spend years writing articles in support of the party to which he does *not* belong. Then you have the ludicrous spectacle of a man speaking in the afternoon at a meeting in support of a Liberal candidate, and in the evening writing a political article for a Conservative newspaper. This is, perhaps, not so bad as it sounds, as people are beginning to recognize that the party system has become little more than a game, in which journalists take part no less than politicians. Mr. Jeffs might have given us a chapter on the political conscience, the unhealthy state of which is one of the worst features of the present time. This is a sane and broad-minded book, and can be warmly recommended.

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